

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image reading device, comprising:

a feeding part that is adapted to feed ~~[[feeds]]~~ a copy at a plurality of feeding speeds,

a plurality of reading parts disposed along a feeding path of the copy to ~~[[that]]~~ read the copy fed by said feeding part, and

a noise detecting part that~~[[, when comparing]]~~ compares image data outputted by said plurality of reading parts, ~~and detecting~~ detects that a specific number of pixels of the image data are not coincident ~~[[as]]~~ to a plurality of pixels arrayed in the sub-scanning direction, and determines that the image data outputted by a specific reading part among said plurality of reading parts contains streaky noises regardless of the feeding speed.

Claim 2 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 1, wherein, when the image data outputted by the specific reading part is larger than the image data outputted by another reading part, said noise detecting part determines that the image data outputted by said specific reading part contains black streaky noises.

Claim 3 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 1, wherein, when the image data outputted by said specific reading part is smaller than the image data outputted by another reading part, said noise detecting part determines that the image data outputted by said specific reading part contains white streaky noises.

Claim 4 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 1, further comprising a noise eliminating part that, when said noise detecting part determines the image data to contain noises, removes the noises from the image data outputted by said specific reading part.

Claim 5 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 4, wherein said noise eliminating part removes the noises by replacing the image data outputted by said specific reading part with the image data outputted by another reading part.

Claim 6 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 4, further comprising a part that acquires the image data of a skin of said copy, wherein said noise eliminating part removes the noises by replacing the image data outputted by said specific reading part with the image data of the skin of said copy.

Claim 7 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 4, wherein said noise eliminating part removes the noises from the image data outputted by said specific reading part retroactively to a specific period from a moment when the image data is determined to contain said noises.

Claim 8 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 1, further comprising a reading position moving part that moves a reading position of a copy by said reading part, when said noise detecting part determines that the image data outputted by a specific reading part among said plurality of the remaining parts contains the streaky noises.

Claim 9 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 8, wherein said reading position moving part moves the reading position of the copy by said reading part, during a period from the end of a copy reading operation in which the image data is determined to contain the streaky noises until the start of a next copy reading operation.

Claim 10 (Original): The image reading device according to claim 8, wherein said noise detecting part has a storage part that memorizes the positions of pixels including said noises, and outputs a control signal that prohibits the reading operation of the copy, after said reading position moving part moves the reading position, when the image data outputted by said specific reading part is again determined to contain the streaky noises as to the same pixels as the pixels stored by said storage part.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): An image reading device, comprising:

a feeding part that is adapted to feed ~~[[feeds]]~~ a copy at a plurality of feeding speeds,

three or more reading parts diposed along a feeding path of the copy to ~~[[that]]~~ read the copy fed by said feeding part, and

an image selecting part that compares image data obtained from each of said reading parts, selects the image data obtained from a specific reading part as output image data when the image data is coincident with each other, conducts the majority operation among the image data obtained from said reading parts as to a plurality of pixels arrayed in the sub-scanning direction, when inconsistencies of the image data are generated in succession between two or more reading parts, and selects one item of the image data belonging to the majority side as the output image data regardless of the feeding speed.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The image reading device according to claim 1,

wherein the plurality of reading parts include three or more reading parts that read the copy fed by the feeding part, and the image reading device further comprising an output image data generation part that selects the image data obtained from a specific reading part as output image data when the noise detecting part detects that the image data are coincident with each other, selects image data obtained from two image reading parts with the least difference between them, when the noise detecting part detects that the image data are not coincident as to a plurality of pixels arrayed in the sub-scanning direction in succession between two or more reading parts, and generates the output image data from these image data.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): An image reading device, comprising:

- a feeding part that feeds a copy,
- a plurality of reading parts that read the copy fed by said feeding part, and
- a selection part that selects, by a user's instruction, a reading part for generating output images among said plurality of reading parts.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): An image reading device, comprising:

- a feeding part that feeds a copy,
- a plurality of reading parts that read the copy fed by said feeding part,
- a noise detecting part that compares image data items outputted by said plurality of reading parts, and on the basis of the comparison result, determines whether or not the image data outputted by the reading part for generating output images selected among said plurality of reading parts contains noises,
- a noise eliminating part that conducts, on the basis of the determination result by said noise detecting part, noise eliminating processing to the image data outputted by the reading part for generating output images, and
- a switch part that switches said reading part for generating output images into another reading part than the current one, when said noise detecting part determines during reading of said copy that the image data contains noises.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The image reading device according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a noise eliminating part that conducts, on the basis of the determination result by said noise detecting part, noise eliminating processing to the image data read by a reading part selected as the reading part for generating output images among said plurality of reading parts,

a noise quantity measuring part that measures, on the basis of the determination result by said noise detecting part, the quantity of noise for one main scanning line as to each of said plurality of reading parts, and

a switch part that switches the reading part for generating output images into a reading part having the smallest quantity of noises measured by said noise quantity measuring part.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An image reading method, comprising the steps of: reading, by a plurality of reading parts, a copy fed by a feeding part that is adapted to feed the copy at a plurality of feeding speeds,

comparing image data [[items]] outputted by said plurality of reading parts regardless of the feeding speed, and

determining the image data outputted by a specific reading part of said plurality of reading parts contains streaky noises, when the image data items are not coincident in succession as to a plurality of pixels arrayed in the sub-scanning direction.

Claim 17 (Original): The image reading device according to Claim 4, wherein the noise eliminating part applies the same process as that of said specific eliminating part in the sub-scanning direction with a plurality of lines in succession even after the noises are determined to be contained.

Claim 18 (Original): The image reading device according to Claim 4, wherein the noise eliminating part applies the same process as that of said specific eliminating part to a plurality of adjoining pixels in the main scanning direction of the pixels that are determined to contain the noises.

Claim 19 (Original): The image reading device according to Claim 1, further comprising a setting part that sets said specific number of pixels to a larger value, as the feeding speed of the copy fed by said feeding part becomes faster.

Claim 20 (Original): The image reading device according to Claim 1, further comprising a setting part that sets said specific number of pixels on the basis of the number of pixels of the noises produced when the feeding speed of the copy fed by said feeding part is fast.

Claim 21 (Original): The image reading device according to Claim 1, further comprising a setting part that sets said specific number of pixels on the basis of the amount of the phase shift of the outputted image data in said plurality of reading parts, which is created when the feeding speed of the copy fed by said feeding part is fast.